THE PRINCIPAL

ACTS

OF THE

General Assembly

OF THE

CHURCH

OF

SCOTLAND,

Conveened at *Edinburgh*, *December* 17, 1695.

Collected and Extracted from the Records, By the Clerk thereof

EDINBURGH,
Printed by *George Mosman*, Printer to this CHURCH and Its
ASSEMBLIES *Anno Domini* M. DC. XCVI

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OF

SCOTLAND,

Holden and Begun at *Edinburgh*, the 17 Day of *December* 1695, and ending the 4 of *January* 1696 Years.

I.

The Meeting of the General Assembly,

Edinburgh 17 *December* 1695, Post Meridiem. Sess. I.

THE which day, After Sermon Preached by Mr. *John Law* one of the Ministers of *Edinburgh*, Moderator of the last Assembly, upon 1 *Corinth.* 4,2. The General Assembly of the Ministers and Ruling Elders of this Church of *Scotland*, did conveen in the Assembly-House; where after Prayer by the said Mr. *John Law*, An Roll was taken up of the Commissioners Delegated by the several Presbytries, Burghs Royal, and Universities for holding this Assembly.

II.

Act continuing Mr. John Law Moderator *till Friday next.*

Eadem Seſſione.

THE ſaid day, The General Aſſembly Conſidering that many of their Members had not yet come to this Town, Did therefore put it to the Vote. Whether to chuſe a New Moderator preſently; Or continue Mr. *John Law* Moderator till *Fryday* next, And it carried *nemine contradicente*, That the ſaid Mr. *John Law* ſhould be continued Moderator till *Friday* next.

III.

Act appointing Mr. John Bannatyne *to officiat as Clerk till Friday next.*

Eadem Seſſione.

THE General Aſſembly Conſidering that through the Deceaſe of Mr. *Robert Park* Advocat, Their Clerks place is now become Vacant. Therefore they by an Unanimous Vote made choice of Mr. *John Bannatyne* Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Lanerk*, and one of their own Number to Officiat as Clerk untill *Friday* next,

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IV.

Appointment of a Diet to be keeped by the Aſſembly for Prayer.

Eadem Seſſione.

THE General Aſſembly Appoints to Morrow being *Wedneſday* betwixt *Nine* and *Twelve* a Clock in the Forenoon to be ſet a part by the Members of this Aſſembly for Publick Prayer to the Almighty God for his Countenance-

ing

and directing this Assembly in the Matters that shall come before them, and Recommends to all the saids Members to meet in the Assembly-house timeously for that effect.

V.

Appointment of another Dyet *for Prayer*,

Edinburgh 18. *December* 1695. *ante Merid.* Sess. 2.

THE General Assembly being met, This Diet was spent in Prayer, according to the Appointment made Yesterday thereanent, And further it was agreed to, That the Members of this Assembly should meet again to Morrow for publick Prayer, and accordingly it was Recommended to all the Members to meet in the Assembly-house to Morrow immediatly after Sermon for the effect foresaid.

VI.

A Diet spent in Prayer

Edinburgh 19 *Decemb.* 1695. *ante Merid*, Sess. 3.

THE General Assembly being met, This Diet was spent in Prayer according to the Appointment made Yesterday thereanent, and Adjourned till to Morrow at Ten a Clock in the Forenoon.

The Recording of His Majestie's *Commission to John* Lord *Carmichael, for Representing His* Majesty *in this* General Assembly, *with the Commissioner and Moderators Speeches*,

Edinburght 20 of *December* 1695. *Ante Meridiem*, Sess 4.

THIS Day, The General Assembly of this National Church being met, and Mr. *Patrick Simpson* chosen Moderator, and Mr. *John Bannatyne* Clerk, There was produced to them by a Noble Lord, *John* Lord *Carmichael*, His Majesties *Commission* under the Great Seal of the

Kingdom of *Scotland*, Nominating and Appointing him to be His Majeſties High Commiſſioner and Repreſentative in this National Aſſembly, which Commiſſion was publickly Read with all due Honour and Reſpect, and the General Aſſembly Appointed and hereby Appoints the ſaid Commiſſion to be Regiſtrated in the Records of the General Aſſembly, therein to remain, *ad futuram rei Memoriam*, The *Tenor* whereof follows.

" *GULIELMUS* Dei Gratia, Magnæ *Britanniæ*, *Fran-*
" *ciæ* & *Hiberniæ* Rex, Fideique Defenſor: Omnibus probis
" Hominibus, ad quos præſentes Literæ Noſtræ pervenerint,
" *Salutem*. Quandoquidem ſtatuimus Conventum Generalem
" Eccleſiæ, Antiqui noſtri Regni *Scotiæ*, ad *Decimum ſeptimum*
" diem Menſis *Decembris* Inſtantis continuari, Noſque autem
" abundè Cupidi & Judicantes etiam neceſſarium eſſe, propter
" commodum dictæ Eccleſiæ, ut *Generalis Conventus* ante-
" dictus Die ſtatuto debitè obſervetur, Sed rebus magni momenti
" alio vocantibus, dicto Conventui intereſſe Nequimus, cum-
" que Teſtimoniis perplurimis & probatis abundè nobis Satisfact-
" um ſit, & de præclaris Animi dotibus & fide Eximia, Fideliſſimi
" & Dilectiſſimi, Noſtri Conſiliarii *Joannis Domini Carmichael*
" Quodque ad Munera Summi Officii inframentionati rite exer-
" cenda & obeunda in finem ſupra expreſſum uſquequaque eſt
" idoneus; Noveritis igitur nos teciſſe & Conſtituiſſe, ſicuti per
" has noſtras patentes Literas Facimus & Conſtituimus eundem
" *Joannem Dominum Carmichael* Supremum Noſtrum Com-
" miſſionarium, Quoad effectum infra expreſſum. Damus
" pariter & concedimus illi, Sacram Noſtram perſonam & Autho-
" ritatem Noſtram Regalem Repræſentandi, præſentiam Noſtram
" ſupplendi, Locumque Noſtrum in dicto ſubſequenti Generali
" Conventu, Tanquam Commiſſionario Noſtro, in hunc effect-
" um ſpecialiter conſtituto, Tenendi, Omniaque alia ad Imperi-
" um & Munus Commiſſionarii, pro Generali Eccleſiæ Con-
" ventu peragendi, Tam plene, adeoque liberè in quovis Re-
" ſpectu, quam Quilibet alius ejuſdem Supremi Muneris & Cha-
" racteris fecerat, ſeu quovis tempore Retroacto facere poterat, at-
" que ſicuti, Nos ipſi perſonaliter præſentes facere poterimus, ple-
" niſſimam & ampliſſimam Noſtram poteſtatem & Commiſſio-
" nem. Quæquidem omnia & ſingula, à dicto *Joanne Domino*
" *Carmichael*, in hâc Noſtrâ Commiſſione proſequendâ, legitime
" facienda, Nos firmiter approbamus, Rata habemus & habituri
" ſumus. Omnibus & ſingulis Inſuper antedicti Conventus &
" Eccleſiæ Paſtoribus & Presbyteris, & Cæteris quibuſcunque
" hujus Regni Noſtri ſubditis, cujuſcunque Qualitatis & Conditio-
" nis, Ut dictum *Joannem Dominum Carmichael*, Tanquam
" Supremum Noſtrum Commiſſionarium, Quoad effectum &
" Modum ſupra mentionatum, Agnoſcant, Revereantur

" &

„ & dicto ipſius Audientes ſe præbeant, ſtrictè Mandamus &
„ Imperamus. Ac denique hanc Noſtram Commiſſionem à die
„ quo Magnum hujus Regni Noſtri Sigillum præſentibus eſt ap-
„ penſum, ac deinceps hac ſequenti Seſſione dicti Generalis Con-
„ ventus & uſque dum a Nobis revocabitur in vigore continuare
„ Declaravimus, & per præſentes Declaramus. In cujus Rei
„ Teſtimonium, Præſentibus Magnum Sigillum Noſtum Ap-
„ pendi Præcepimus. Apud Aulam Noſtram de *Kenſingtoun*,
„ *Decimo Tertio* die menſis *Decembris*, Anno Domini, *Mille-*
„ ſimo Sexcenteſimo Nonogeſimo quinto, Annoque Regni No-
ſtri Septimo.

Per ſignaturam manu S. D. N. *Supraſignatam.*

{ Locus Sigilli Appenſi }

IN DORSO.

Written to the great Seal, and Regiſtrat the 19 *day of* December 1695. Ch. Ker.

Sealed at Edinburgh *the* 19 *day of* Decem. 1695 Jo. Dickſon

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AFter Reading of which Commiſſion, Mr. *Patrick Simſon* Moderator, did in the Aſſemblies Name Repreſent to His Grace, how great a Mercy it was to this Church and Kingdom, That His Majeſty had Called and Countenanced this National Aſſembly with His Authority, and Honoured It with a Repreſentative of His Royal Perſon, who by His former prudent Conduct in two former General Aſſemblies, hath rendred Himſelf moſt Acceptable to this Aſſembly, to Repreſent His Majeſty therein.

Whereupon His Grace, His Majeſties High Commiſſioner delivered Himſelf as follows. Right Reverend and You the Remanent Members of this Aſſembly, You are now met in this Aſſembly conform to the Kings Appointment. And His Majeſty having Honoured me to be His Commiſſioner, I am warranted to give you all Aſſurance of His Majeſties Reſolution to Maintain Presbyterian Government in this Church, and to evidence His Fatherly Care for its welfare: His Majeſty Expects, That at this Time you will chiefly make it Your Work to Regulate Matters of Order and Diſcipline amongſt your ſelves. It

is

is the Kings great Regrate, that there are ſo many Churches Vacant within this Kingdom, which obviouſly ſuggeſts, that it would be your beſt work, as indeed it would be moſt acceptable to His Majeſty, that you ſhould apply your ſelves principally to the Reſtoring the Goſpel to ſuch Churches, and in doing of this you may be very aſſured of His Majeſties Countenance and Authority. It is alſo evidently convenient and likeways expected, That if Good Men apply to you to be aſſumed, you will Receive their Applications with all Charity and Moderation.

I hope the good Spirit of God ſhall direct you in theſe matters to the beſt Advantage, only I recommend to you to mind your Buſineſs cloſly without Heats, and unneceſſary Contentions, and to make all the Diſpatch you can, to bring this Aſſembly to a happy Iſſue, both for the Churches good, and His Majeſties Satisfaction.

VIII.

Act anent Commiſſions to the General Aſſembly

Edinburgh, 23 of *December* 1695. *Poſt Meridiem.* Seſſ. 5

THE General Aſſembly hereby Recommends it to the ſeveral Presbytries of this National Church to keep an uniform method, as near as may be in granting Commiſſions to the Members of the General Aſſembly, and not to Inſert particular Inſtructions in their Commiſſions, and for the better attaining the end foreſaid. The General Aſſembly gives the form after inſert for a Directory

At the day of Years.
The which day the Presbytry of did and hereby do Nominate and appoint Mr. Miniſter at Mr. Miniſter at and Ruling Elders Their Commiſſioners to the next General Aſſembly of this Church, Indited to meet at the day of next to come or when or where it ſhall happen to ſit; willing them to Repair thereto, and attend all the Diets of the ſame, and there to Conſult, Vote and Determine in all Matters that come before them, to the Glory of God, and good of His Church: *According to the Word of God, the Confeſſion of Faith, and agreeable to the Conſtitutions of this Church*, as they will be Anſwerable: And that they Report their Diligence therein at their Return therefrom. *Extracted by Me*

IX.

IX.

Act anent Trafficquing Priests, and the Education of Young Noble-men, Gentle-men and others Children of Popish Parents.

Edinburgh 24 *December* 1695. *Post Meridiem.* Sess. 6.

THE General Assembly Recommends to all Provincial Synods, Presbytries and Kirk-Sessions within this National Church to take particular notice of *Traffiqning Priests*, and appoints Lists to be taken up of their Names, and given to the Privy Council, with an Address for Executing of the Laws against them: And the General Assembly Recommends to Presbytries to advert to the Education of Young Noble-men, Gentle-men and others Children of Popish Parents and to put the *7th* Act of the General Assembly 1690 thereanent in Execution.

X.

Act anent Quakers.

Eadem Sessione.

THE General Assembly of this National Church for prevention of the growth of these abominable Heresies of the *Quakers*, do Recommend to all Provincial Synods, Presbytries, Ministers, and Kirk Sessions to use all proper means for Reclaiming of them, and in case of their obstinacy to proceed against them with the Censures of the Church, and specially against the Ring-Leaders, that are Traffiquers for seducing of others:

XI.

An Overture and Act anent Novations.

Edinburgh 25 *December* 1695 *Post Meridiem.* Sess. 7.

THe General Assembly of this National Church having heard an Overture brought in from the *Committee* for *Overtures*, That no New Acts relating to the Doctrine, Worship or Government of this Church be made

untill they be first transmitted to the several Presbytries of this National Church: Which being considered, the General Assembly Recommends it to the Members of this Assembly to discourse upon the said Overture with their respective Presbytries, That the next General Assembly may be the more ripe to determine anent the convenience thereof: And in the mean time, the General Assembly hereby Revives the Acts of former Assemblies made thereanent, and particularly the 13 Act of the Assembly 1639, and 14 Act of the Assembly 1641.

XII.

Act approving Overtures anent a more expedite and certain way of planting the North, with fixed Ministers.

Edinburgh, the last of *December* 1695. *Post Meridiem*

Sess. 12.

THE General Assembly of this National Church having considered the Overtures underwritten, which were at two several Dyets publickly Read over in open Assembly and Examined, and any Members that desired were allowed to have doubles thereof, to the effect they might be perused by them, and Intimation was made to give in their Objections if they had any, to a Committee appointed for that end and last of all upon the Day and Date hereof the saids Overtures were again a third time publickly Read in presence of the General Assembly, as also the Additional Overtures annexed thereto, the Tenor of both which follows.

1. "That for the more Expedite planting of Ministers on "the *North side* of the Water of *Tay*, The Assembly Nominate "a Commission of some of the most Experienced Ministers and "Elders to meet at *Edinburgh*, and there to sit Monthly from "time to time, until there shall be settled on the said *North side* "*of Tay* Twenty two Ministers of some considerable standing "and Experience, now belonging to the Presbytries on the "south side of the said Water.

2. "That when any of the Parochins of the said North shall "call any of the following Ministers, they may without sending "any Commissioner to prosecute the same, send the said Call "approven and concurred with by the Presbytrie of the bounds, "to the Moderator of the said Commission, who for greater Ex-"pedition shall cause double the said Call and attest the Copy, "and send the same with the Reasons of the desired Transporta-

tion

"tion in a Letter to the Moderator of that Presbytrie, to whom the Minister called doth belong.

3. "That the Moderator of the said Presbytrie, upon the "Receipt of the said Letter shall be obliged to Transmitt the said "Call with the Reasons thereof to the Minister called, and shall "cause summond the said Minister, and the paroch he belongs to, "the next Sabbath in the ordinary way to appear before the said "Presbytrie, and Answer the Call and Reasons, and if the ordinary "time of the meeting of the said *Presbytrie* shall fall not to be "within Eleven days, then the Moderator shall call a *Presbytrie* "*pro re nata*, against that time.

4. That the *Presbytrie* at their said meeting, shall without any delay, consider & determine the process of the said Call, thus brought before them, and if they shall not at the same time Transport the Minister called to the said paroch he is called unto, they be obliged to transmitt the said Call, Reasons, & Answers & Presbytries Determination to the said Commission, against the first ensueing diet thereof: Providing there interveen Ten days betwixt and the said diet, and shall Summond the said Minister called, and his paroch, to appear before the said Commission, to answer finally thereunto.

5. That the said Commission at *Edinburgh*, do thereupon without any delay, consider and determine the said process, and that whether the said Minister, and his paroch thus Summoned doe appear or not.

6. That when the said Commission, or Presbytrie pass a Sentence of Transportation, it shall be obeyed by the Minister Transported, against the time Limited in the Act of Transportation, under the pain of Suspension, which he is to lye under, untill he obey, and which censure the Assembly doth require the said Commission to inflict upon him who doth disobey

7. That there be Forty four Ministers of some considerable Experience, fit to be Transported to the North, nominate by this Assembly, in manner following, of which the one half shall upon Calls as above be Transported be Vertue of this Act.

8. That there may be some suteable proportioning of the said Transportations, It's Overtured, that where a Presbytrie on the South side of *Tay*, is two third parts planted with fixed Ministers and hath eight fixed Ministers therein That two of these eight (and proportionally where there are Sixteen, or Twenty four) be nominate by the Assembly making up in all the above Number of Fourty four Ministers.

9. That out of these Presbytries who furnish Two, one of the said Two shall be Transported, and but one, and so proportionally where the Presbytrie furnishes moe, Making up of all Twenty Two to be Actually Transported.

10. That the foresaid Number of Fourty four, out of which only Twenty two are to be Transported, shall be furnished by the following Presbytries, *viz.* By the Presbytrie of *Chirn-side* Two, one of which is to be actually Transported; By the Presbytrie of *Erslstoun* Two, one of which is to be actually Transported; By the Presbytrie of *Jedburgh* Two, By *Melross* or *Selkrig* Two, By *Dumbar* Two, By *Dalkeith* none, having already given one, By *Edinburgh* Four, Two of which are to be Transported; having already given one; By *Linlithgow* Two, one of which is to be Transported; By *Peebles* Two, one of which is to be Transported; By *Biggar* Two, one of which is to be Transported, By *Dumfreis* Two, one of which is to be Transported; By *Lochmaben* Two, one of which is to be Transported; By *Kirkcudbright* Two, one of which is to be Transported, having given one already; By *Air* Two, one of which is to be Transported, having given one already; By *Irvin* Two, one of which is to be Transported, having given one already; By *Hamilton* Two, One of which is to be Transported; By *Lanerk* Two, one of which is to be Transported; By *Glasgow* Two, one of which is to be Transported, having given one already; By *Paisley* Two, one of which is to be Transported; By *Dumbarton* Two, one of which is to be Transported; By *Coupar* Two, one of which is to be Transported; By *Kirkcaldy* Two, one of which is to be Transported; By *Dumfermling* Two, one of which is to be Transported: All which make up the abovenamed Number, out of which the half is to be Transported to the *North* after the way and manner above-expreſt.

11. That of these Fourty four out of the Presbytries abovenamed, The half of them be appointed to go North by way of Mission to the several Provinces they shall be allotted unto, so as to be there against the *First* Sabbath of *March* next, and to stay there *Three Moneths*, Exercising their Ministry according to the appointment of the Presbytries unto which they come; And the other half to go North after the same manner, and to stay the same length of time, against the *First* Sabbath of *June* next, and that these of them who have not been in the North already go first.

12. That the Brethren from the North do meet among themselves and proportion these Twenty two among the several Provinces of *Angus* and *Mernes* (comprehending *Rattray* parish) *Aberdeen*, *Murray* and *Caithness*, and that they concert amongst themselves, out of which of the above-written Presbytries they will have their *Quota's*, and that they do this before the Nomination of the persons to be Transported.

13. That beside these Fourty four. There be some Ministers and Expectants out of *Argyl Shire* Nominate who being Preachers

ers of the *High-land Language* are to be allotted to supply *Ross*, *Sutherland*, *Caithness*, and the Town of *Inverness*.

14. It is also Overtured, That such as have been appointed by the Judicatories of this Church since the last General Assembly for the Supply of the North, and have not obeyed their Appointments, be not only Censured for their Disobedience, but their Appointments renewed and they ordained to go with the first Supplies.

15. That the General Assembly declare, That these Parochins thus to be vacated by Transportation, when they shall after come to be settled with another Minister, That the said Minister shall be declared, not Transportable from that Paroch without their consent, and unless he have unsupportable Grievances therein.

16. That the Assembly Name Two or Three out of each Synod on the *South* side of *Tay*, to meet with the Brethren of the North, to Concert the Names of the above Fourty four Ministers, and to present the same to the Assembly to be by them Nominated and Appointed.

Additional Overtures for a more expedite planting the North

1. IT is Overtured that the Presbytry of *Irvine* be exempted from any being Nominate to be Transported, but not excused from quarterly supplies.

2. That beside the Brother of the Presbytry of *Dalkeith*, who is Transported already, they send one to the North in Mission.

3. That the Presbytry of *Dumfreis*, because of the particular circumstances they are in, have the Presbytries of *Penpont* and *Midlebee* to help them, and that two fit persons be named out of these Three Presbytries, and not above one out of any one Presbytry of the Three.

4. That in the Nomination of the Commission, One at least out of every Presbytry be Named, who send Two of the Fourty four abovementioned.

5. That the Suspension to be inflicted in the case above expresst be taken off, by the Synod of the bounds, or next Assembly, if they find insuperable difficulties arising in the Minister Transported his obeying the sentence: And providing they immediatly Nominate another fit person who shall effectually supply the others room.

6. That out of St. *Andrews* Presbytry; Two be Named and added to the Number.

7. That all these Overtures are condiscended to, only for the present exigent, and that this shall be no Precedent for aftertimes,

but in caſe there be any Tranſportations purſued afterward, that they ſhall proceed in the ordinary courſe and no otherways?

All theſe a abovewritten Overtures both Principal and Additional being maturely conſidered, The General Aſſembly of this National Church by an Unanimous Vote did, and hereby do approve the ſame, and Recommends and Appoints according thereto in all points.

XIII.

Act anent Teſtimonials.

Eadem Seſſione.

THE General Aſſembly Appoints all Probationers that Applies to Presbytries to bring not only ſufficient Teſtimonials, but alſo a Letter from a known perſon to the Presbytrie, and that the Presbytrie write to them from whom the Teſtimonials comes (if need be) to know the Verity thereof.

XIV.

Act anent the Supply of Roſs, Sutherland *and* Caithneſs.

Edinburgh 3 *January* 1696. *Ante Meridiem* Seſſ. 16.

THE Generaly Aſſembly of this National Church, taking to their ſerious Conſideration, the many Vacant Churches, and great Deſolations that are in the Bounds of *Roſs*, *Sutherland* and *Caithneſs*, Do therefore appoint, that there be ſent in Miſſion to the ſaids Bounds of *Sutherland*, *Roſs* and *Caithneſs*, the Miniſters and Probationers aftermentioned, in manner and to the effect under-expreſt. *viz.* Mr. *Robert Duncanſon* Miniſter from the Provincial Synod of *Argyle*, who is declared already Tranſportable, and upon a Call to be Tranſported, in caſe the Commiſſion ſhall ſee cauſe, to

to whom that matter is hereby Referred; As also, that such as have the *Irish* Language in Lowland-Congregations, be sent in Mission, and upon Calls transported be the Commission, and that in the same way that other Ministers are appointed to be Transported to the *North*; And farder, that Mrs. *Thomas* and *Hector Frasers* Probationers, (who were formerly appointed) go there, and Mr. *Hugh Duff* be sent to that Presbytrie, to pass his Tryals, in order to be settled there, and such other Probationers, that have the *Irish* Language, as the Synod of *Argyle* can spare.

XV.

Act nominating and appointing Ministers to go North, by way of Mission.

Edinburgh 3 *January* 1696. *Post Meridiem* Sess. 17.

THE General Assembly of this National Church, taking to their Consideration, That by their Act, dated the last day of *December* last, they have laid down a way for a more expedite Planting of the Vacant Churches, on the *North-side* of *Tay*, and for that end, appointed the Number of fourty four Ministers, to be sent *North* by way of Mission, and now having according to the said Act, concerted the Names of those to be sent to the *North*, Do therefore Nominate and Appoint the Ministers from the several Presbytries afternamed, to repair to their respective Posts in the *North*, in manner, at the times, and according to the proportions underwriten, *viz.* To the Province of *Angus* and *Merns*, (Including *Rattray* Parish,) From the Presbytrie of *Erskoun*, Mr. *William Arrat* Minister of the Gospel at *Jinglekirk*, and Mr. *William Abercromby* at *Lauder*; From the Presbytrie of *Jedburgh*, Mr. *John Cranston* at *Creelling*, and Mr. *James Borland* at *Bedrule*; From the Presbytrie of *Edinburgh*, Mr. *Thomas Wilkie* at *Edinburgh*, the other to be appointed by the Presbytrie thereof; From the Presbytrie of *Lanerk*, Mr. *Patrick Easson* at *Wiston*, and Mr. *John Bryce* at *Crawfurd-John*. To the Province of *Aberdeen*, From the Presbytrie of *Chirnside*, Mr. *James Ramsay* at *Eymouth*, and Mr. *Andrew Guthrie* at *Edrum*; From the Presbytrie of *Melros* or *Selkirg*, Mr. *Hugh Craig* at *Gallashields*, and Mr. *Robert Edgar* at *Maxtine*

Maxtine; From the Presbytrie of *Dumbar*, Mr. *Andrew Brown* at *Spott*, and Mr. *John Currie* at *Oldhamſtocks*; From the Presbytrie of *Peebles*, Mr. *Robert Taitt* at *Traquair*, and Mr. *James Thomſon* at *Tweedmure*; From the Presbytrie of *Biggar*, Mr. *James Brown* at *Walſtoun*, and Mr. *John Sandilands* at *Dolphingtoun*; From the Presbytrie of *Air*, Mr. *Thomas Kennedy* at *Ballintrea*, and Mr *Andrew Rodger* at *Galſtoun*; From the Presbytrie of *Paiſley*, Mr. *James Stirling* at *Kilbarchan*, and Mr. *John Paſley* at *Lochennoch*; From the Presbytrie of *Kirkcaldy*, Mr. *Martine Shanks* at *Auchterteul*, and Mr. *James Inglis* at *Burntiſlana*; From the Presbytrie of *Lochmaben*, Mr. *William Steel* at *Lochmaben*, and Mr. *Hugh Mchendry* at *Daltoun*; From the Presbytrie of *Kirkcudbright*, Mr. *Samuel Spalding* at *Partane*, and Mr. *John Murdoch* at *Corſemichael*. To the Province of *Murray*, From the Presbytrie of *Edinburgh*, Mr. *John Gilchriſt* at *South-Leith*, the other to be nominate and appointed by the Presbytrie. From the Presbytrie of *Hamilton*, Mr. *James Hog* at *Dalſerf*, and Mr. *Joſeph Drew* at *New monkland*; From the Presbytrie of *Dumbartan*, Mr. *David Fleckfield* at *Balpvon*, and Mr. *John Ritchie* at *Kilpatrick*; From the Presbytrie of *Coupar*, Mr. *Andrew Young* at *Munzie*, and Mr. *William Selkrig* at *Falkland*; From the Presbytrie of *St. Andrews*, Mr. *George Gordon* at *Leuquhars*, and Mr. *Thomas Black* at *Enſtruther-weſter*; From the Presbytries of *Dumfrees*, *Midlbee* and *Penpont*, Mr *John Lawry* at *Wachop*, and Mr. *John Paiſley* at *Mertoun*. To the Province of *Caithneſs*, From the Presbytrie of *Linlithgow*, Mr. *Donald Campbel* at *Queensferry*, and Mr. *John Bonnar* at *Torphichan*; From the Presbytrie of *Dumfermling*, Mr. *William Innes* at *Carnock*, and Mr. *Alexander Steedman* at *Beeth*. The General Aſſembly hereby appoints the Brethren, who are firſt named in each Presbytrie, to go ſo, as to be there the firſt Sabbath of *March*, and the laſt named in each Presbytrie, againſt the firſt Sabbath of *June* next: As alſo, the General Aſſembly appoints, that theſe of the ſaid Brethren firſt named, who are actually preſent at their reſpective Poſts in the *North*, ſtay ſometime longer, and that to ſtand for their Miſſion, by vertue of this Act.

XVI.

Act approving the Proceedings of the Commissions of the General Assemblies, 1690, and 1694.

Eadem Sessione.

THE General Assembly of this National Church, having heard the Report of a Committee of their own Number, appointed to Revise, Consider and Examine the *Actings* and *Proceedings* of the *Commission for Visitations on the South side of Tay*, appointed by the *General Assembly* 1690, beginning the 14 day of *November* 1690, and ending the 30 of *October* 1691 years, inclusive of both days; As also, the Actings and Proceedings of the *Commissioners* appointed by the *General Assembly* 1694, to meet at *Edinburgh*, beginning the 18 *April* 1694, and ending the 5 day of *April* 1695, inclusive of both days, and after serious and mature Consideration thereof, Finding that the whole Acts, Proceedings, and Conclusions of the saids Commissioners, contained in the Register thereof, do evidence much Wisdom, Diligence, Vigilancie, and commendable Zeal; and that the saids Commissioners have orderly and formally proceeded in every thing, according to their Commissions, and Instructions; Therefore, this General Assembly did, and hereby do unanimously Ratifie and Approve the saids whole Acts, Proceedings, and Conclusions of the saids Commissioners appointed by the saids General Assemblies 1690, and 1694 Years.

XVII.

Act Approving the Proceedings of the Committee for the North, appointed by the General Assembly 1694.

Eadem Sessione.

THE General Assembly of this National Church, having heard the Report of a Committee, of their own Number, appointed to Revise, Consider and Examine the *Actings* and *Proceedings* of the *Committee for the*

the *North*, appointed by the General Assembly, held at *Edinburgh* in the year 1694, beginning the 14 day of *June*, and ending the 29 day of *August* next thereafter; and after serious and mature consideration thereof, finding that the whole Acts, Proceedings and Conclusions of the said Committee, contained in the Register thereof, subscribed by Mr. *William Mackie* Clerk thereto, do evidence much Wisdom, Prudence, Diligence Vigilancy, and commendable Zeal, and that the said Committee hath orderly and formally proceeded in every thing according to their Commission, and Instructions: therefore, This General Assembly, by an unanimous Vote, did, and hereby do Ratify and Approve the saids whole Acts, Proceedings and Conclusions of the said Committee, appointed for the *North*, contained in the laid Register.

XVIII.

Act Recommending to Ministers to Preach Catechetical Doctrine.

Eadem Sessione.

THE General Assembly of this National Church, Considering how necessary and edifying it is, That the People be well acquainted with the Foundaments Principles of the Christian Religion, Do therefore Recommend to the care of Ministers, that beside their ordinary Work of Catechising, they also preach Catechetical Doctrine, at such times, and in such manner, as they shall find most conducive for the Edification of their Flocks.

XIX.

Act anent Recommendations for Charity.

Eadem Sessione.

THE General Assembly Appoints that no Minister, Kirk Sessions or Elders give Recommendations for Charity to any without the bounds of their own Parochins, nor Presbytries without the bounds of their Presbytries, nor Provin-

cial Synods without their bounds, and that any Recommendations so to be given within their Respective bounds shall be for a definite time.

XX.

Commission of the General Assembly for some Commissioners to meet at Edinburgh.

Eadem Sessione.

THE General Assembly of this National Church Considering the many Vacant Churches on the North side of *Tay*, and having laid down a way for a more Expedite planting of Ministers therein, doth therefore by these Presents Nominate and Appoint Mr. *John Dysert* Minister of the Gospel at *Coldingham*, Mr. *William Jack* at *Kelso*, Mr. *John Vetch* at *Westruther*, Mr. *Gabriel Semple* at *Jedburgh*, Mr. *Robert Wilson* at *Melrose*, Mr. *John Forrest* at *Linton*, Mr. *George Andrew* at *Prestonpans*, Mr. *Patrick Cuming* at *Ormiston*, Mr. *John Law* at *Edinburgh*, Mr. *David Williamson* at *West Kirk*, Mr. *George Barclay* at *Uphall*, Mr *William Russel* at *Stobo*, Mr. *Robert Livingston* at *Libertoun*, Mr. *William Vetch* at *Drumtrees*, Mr. *Thomas Sheilds* at *Sanquhar*, Mr. *George Mulligine* at *Moffat*, Mr. *James Armstrang*, at *Cannaby*, Mr. *Andrew Cameron* at *Kirkcudbright*, Mr. *James Gilchrist* at *Kirkmichael*, Mr *Hugh Thomson* at *Kilmaures*, Mr. *George Clelland* at *Shotts*, Mr. *John Bannatyne* at *Lanerk*, Mr. *Patrick Simson* at *Renfrew*, Mr. *John Hardy* at *Dumbarton*, Mr. *Daniel Campbel* at *Kilmichael*, Mr. *John Darroch* at *Craigness*, Mr. *Allexander Douglass* at *Legy*, Mr. *George Hamilton* at St. *Andrews*, Mr. *Edward Jamieson* at *Monymeal*, Mr. *Archibald Riddel* at *Weems* Mr. *Allan Logan* at *Torryburn*, Mr *James Kirtoun* at *Edinburgh*, Mr. *George Meldrum* there, Mr. *David Blair* there, Mr. *Gilbert Rule* there, Mr. *Thomas Wilkie* at *Cannongate*, Mr. *William Crichton* at *Edinburgh*, Mr. *William Dunlop* Principal of the University at *Glasgow*, Mr. *Thomas Millar* at *Kirkliston*, and Mr *William Moncrieff* at *Largo*, Mr. *Richard Houison* at *Musselburgh*, Mr. *William Trail* at *Borthwick*, Mr. *William Burnet* at *Calder*, Mr. *Matthew Selkrig* at *Crichton*, Mr. *Alexander Dalgleish* at *Abercorn*, and Mr. *John Moncrieff* at *Edinburgh*, Ministers. With *George* Earl of *Melvil* Lord Privy-Seal, *William* Earl of *Crawfurd*, *George* Earl of *Sutherland*, *Patrick* Lord *Polwarth*, Sir *James Stewart* His Majesties Advocat

Adam Cockburn of *Ormiſtoun* Lord Juſtice Clerk, Sir *Alexander Swinton* of *Merſingtoun*, Sir *Colin Campbel* of *Aberuchle*, Sir *David Home* of *Croſſrig*, and Sir *John Hamilton* of *Halcraig*, Four of the Senators of the Colledge of Juſtice, Sir *Robert Cheiſly* Lord Provoſt of *Edinburgh*, Sir *James Ogilvy* of that Ilk His Majeſties Sollicitor, Mr. *Francis Montgomery* of *Giffan*, Lieutenant Collonel *John Erskine*, *William Baillie* of *Lamingtoun*, Sir *Thomas Stewart* of *Kirkfield*, Sir *Thomas Burnet* His Majeſties Phyſician, Sir *John Clerk* of *Pennycook*, Sir *Archibald Mutre* of *Thorntoun*, Mr. *Archibald Dickſon* of *Tourelands*, *Walter Stewart* of *Pardovane*, *James M'clurg* late Dean of Gild of *Edinburgh*, and *Alexander Monteith* Deacon Conveener of *Edinburgh* Ruling Elder To be Comiſſioners of the General Aſſembly to the Effect after expreſt, with full Power and Commiſſion to the ſaids Perſons or their *Quorum* which is hereby Declared to be any Fifteen of the ſaids Commiſſioners, whereof Nine are always to be Miniſters, to meet and conveen within the Aſſembly Houſe at *Edinburgh* upon the Firſt *Tueſday* after the Diſſolution of this General Aſſembly, at Ten a Clock in the Forenoon, and afterward to meet the Firſt *Wedneſday* of every Moneth, and oftner as they ſhall ſee needful, during the Continuance of this Commiſſion; And the General Aſſembly Requires all the Members of the Commiſſion to attend punctually the firſt Meeting thereof, and all the Quarterly Meetings thereafter, and which Commiſſioners at their firſt and quarterly Meetings, are to take to their conſideration the particular Affairs Recommended to them by the General Aſſembly, and the Monethly and Quarterly Meetings to conſider the Tranſportations of the Twenty two Miniſters from the South to the North, with Power alſo to the ſaid Commiſſioners to chuſe their own Moderator and Clerk, And ſicklike the General Aſſembly fully Impowers and Authorizes the ſaid Commiſſioners and their *Quorum* foreſaid, to Conſider, Cognoſce, and finally determine as they ſhall ſee Cauſe, in all References, Appeals and other matters that have been or ſhall be particularly Remitted to them for that Effect by any Act or Order of this Aſſembly, all which are holden as hereinexpreſſ And finally to proceed and cognoſce in every thing contained in and conform to the Overtures and Inſtructions thereanent, approven by this General Aſſembly upon the laſt day of *December* laſt, Entituled, *Act approving Overtures anent a more expedit and certain way for planting the North with fixed Miniſters* as fully and freely as if the ſame were in theſe preſents at full length inſert and ſet down. This Commiſſion is alſo to correſpond with the State for appointing Faſts and Thanſgivings as occaſion falls out, and to ſpecify the Cauſes thereof. Likeas the Gener

General Assembly hereby prohibite the saids Commissioners to meddle in any other matter then what is herein contained; Declaring also that in, and for all their Actings, the saids Commissioners shall be countable to, and Censureable by the next ensueing General Assembly of this Church: And lastly, The General Assembly hereby Declares, that this Commission shall continue till the meeting of the next General Assembly of this National Church.

XXI.

Act against the Atheistical Opinions of the Deists; and for establishing the Confession of Faith.

Edinburgh 4 *January* 1696. *Ante Meridiem* Sess. 18. *& ultima*

THE General Assembly of this Narional Church taking to their serious Consideration, That in many places not a few of Atheistical Principles, who go under the Name *Deists*, and for the time refuse the odious Character of *Atheist* maintain and dissemínate pernicious Principles tending to *Scepticism* and *Atheism*; And that there is no small ground to fear the spreading of that Gangrene through this Land, where (as it is credibly informed) there are not wanting Active *Factors* for *Satan*, and his Kingdom of Darkness, who make it their great Business to overturne and Ridicule true and pure Religion, Do therefore seriously Recommend to, and enjoin the Ministers of the Gospel, where there is any apparent hazard of such a contagion, to warn and guard the Lords people against that Infernal Discourse, and to detect the Abominableness of the Tenets of those Men, such as the denying of all Revealed Religion, the Grand Mysteries of the Gospel. *viz. The Doctrine of the Trinity, the Incarnation of the Messias, His Satisfaction to Justice, Salvation through Him, Justification by His imputed Righteousness to them who believe on His Name, the Resurrection of the Dead, and in a word the certainty and Authority of Scripture Revelation.* As *also their Asserting that there must be a Mathematical evidence for each purpose, before we can be obliged to Assent to any propesition thereanent, and that Natural Light is sufficient to Salvation.* It is also hereby required that Authors who treat well of those Subjects be named to the people in order to

peruſal; As likeways, That Miniſters deal ſeriouſly with th
ſeduced, and ſuch as are moſtly in Hazard to be perverted
but eſpecially with Seducers and Impoſtors, that after ſufficien
inſtruction and Admonition, theſe be proceeded againſt as Scan
dalous, and Heretical Apoſtats uſe to be: And in General the
Aſſembly doth Diſcharge all Miniſters and other Member
of this Church to Publiſh or Vent either by Speaking, Writing
Printing, Teaching or Preaching any Doctrine, Tenet or Op
nion contrare unto, or Inconſiſtent with the *Confeſſion of Fait*
of this Church, or any Article, part or propoſition therein
And appoints that all ſuch as contraveen this Act or any par
thereof be Cenſured by the Church according to their Demerit

XXII.

Act anent Students.

Eadem Seſſione.

THE General Aſſembly taking to their Conſideration th
Danger that arileth to the Church, and to the Soul
of People, and the Contempt that may be brought o
the Miniſtry, by Licenceing or Ordaining Young Men, with
out ſufficient Proof of their Piety, Gravity, Prudence, Sobriety
Orthodoxy, and Learning; Do therefore Appoint, that ſtri
Enquiry be made into all theſe Qualifications, of ſuch as are o
fered to Presbytries, in order to paſſing their Tryals, and tha
ſuch be rejected, who have not ſufficient Teſtimonials from Un
verſities, of their good Behaviour and Proficiency; (and tha
the uſual School-Degrees be enquired after, though not made
neceſſary Qualification,) or at leaſt, ſhould not be found to hav
retrieved their loſt time at Schools, by after-diligence; As alſo
that ſuch as are eſteemed to be vain, or imprudent, or proud, o
worldly-minded, by the generality of ſober intelligent Perſons
who converſe with them, ſhall be kept back from that Sacred
Work

In order to the Education of Young Men for the Miniſtry, I
is recommended to Profeſſors in Divinity, that they require o
ſuch Students as they employ in any Exerciſes, Teſtimonials fro
Univerſities where they have Studied, and Places where the
have Lived.

Th

The General Assembly considering how necessary it is, that they who declare the Oracles of GOD to others, should themselves understand them in the Original Languages; Do require, that none be licenced to Preach, or ordained to the Ministry unless they give good Proof of their understanding the *Greek* and *Hebrew*; And the General Assembly recommendeth to all Candidats for the Ministry, to study also the other Orientall Languages, especially the *Chaldaick*, and *Syriack*, so far as they can.

It is also Recommended, that they be tryed not only in the great Controversies of Religion; But also, in the Controversies concerning the Government and Discipline of the Church.

XXIII.

Act anent Irregularities.

Eadem Sessione.

THE General Assembly do seriously Recommend it to all Synods and Presbytries, that they advert to the many Irregularities committed by vagrant unfixed Ministers, many of whom are lying under Ecclesiastick Censures, to the great Scandal and hinderance of the Gospel, and tending to the Rending of Churches and Congregations; and prudently to proceed to take such course anent them, as the circumstances of the Case and Time requires. And appoints Presbytries, where any great Difficulty occurrs, in Cases of this nature, to consult their Synods, or the Commission appointed by this Assembly thereanent, before they proceed to any further Censure.

XXIV.

The General Assemblies LETTER TO HIS MAJESTY.

May it please Your Majesty.

AS We do Adore the Infinite Goodness and Mercy of GOD towards *Britain* and *Ireland*, in setting Your *MAJESTY* KING over Us, and in working by You so great Deliverance for Us; so We do from Our Hearts bless GOD, for mercifully Preserving Your Sacred Person, in midst of so many Dangers as You have been exposed to, by Sea and Land, and in granting such Success to Your Arms the last Campaign.

We do also, with humble Gratitude, acknowledge Your MAJESTIES many Royal Favours to this Church, and that not only under the shadow of Your Protection, and with the Countenance of Your MAJESTIE'S Authority and Laws, We may peaceably meet together in a *National Assembly*; But that Your MAJESTY hath Honoured Us, to send, as Your Commissioner, to represent Your MAJESTIE'S Royal PERSON among Us, the Lord *Carmichael*, a Person of known and approved Integrity and Loyalty to Your MAJESTY, and who hath been formerly, and still is most acceptable to Us all.

We do humbly beg, and confidently hope, Your MAJESTY, as appointed of GOD, to be the Nursing Father of his Church, will continue Your Royal Favour and Protection to Us, and Command the Vigorous Execution of Your Good Laws, against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness, That Our Land may be throughly reformed from Vice, and purged of whatsoever doth offend.

We do sincerely profess, That next to Our Duty to GOD and Our LORD JESUS CHRIST, It is Our desire to approve Our selves dutiful Subjects to Your MAJESTY. And it shall be Our Endeavour, by Doctrine and Example, in Our several Capacities, to promote Your MAJESTIE'S Honour, and Service in the LORD among the People.

That

That Almighty GOD may Bless and long Preserve Your Royal PERSON, Direct and Prosper Your Councils, and Government, Grant You always Dutiful and Loyal Subjects, Faithful and Victorious Armies and Navies. Give You the Hearts of Your Subjects, and Necks of Your Enemies, That Religion and Righteousness may Flowrish in Your Days, That You may be a Repairer of the Breaches, and Builder of the House of GOD, and the Restorer of the Peace and Liberty of Europe, is, and shall be the incessant Prayer of

May it please Your MAJESTY,

Your MAJESTIE'S most Faithful, most Obedient, and most Humble Subjects,

The Ministers and Elders, met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in Our Presence, in Our Name, and at Our Appointment,

By

Patrick Simson *Moderator.*

XXV.

Act continuing the Supplies of Preaching for the North, *conform to the Act of the* General Assembly 1694.

Eadem Sessione.

THE General Assembly Considering that the Vacancies on the *North* side of the *River of Tay* have increassed greatly since the sitting of the last General Assembly; As also, the paucity of Ministers in these parts, and having before them several Petitions from Noblemen, Gentlemen, Burgesses and others, living in these Parts, Craving that the Assembly would increase the Supply of these Bounds, and promising that they should give all due encouragement to such, as the Lord by this Assembly shall be pleased to direct to them. Therefore the General Assembly have ordained, and hereby Ordains the ordinary Supplies for the *North*, to continue till the next General Assembly, conform to the 14 Act of

the laſt General Aſſembly, Entituled, *Act appointing ſome Mi-niſters for the Supply of the North*; And Recommends t Presbytries and Synods, that theſame be made effectual, the named, and formerly appointed to be ſent from the ſeveral Pre bytries by way of Miſſion, being always ſuſtained as a part the ſaid Supply: And laſtly, the General Aſſembly exempt the Province of *Perth* in their preſent Circumſtances, fro all Supplies to the *North*.

XXVI.

Act Declaring the Appeals made to this Aſſembly, *fr the Committee of the* Aſſembly 1694 *for the* North, *to be fallen from, and Null.*

Eadem Seſſione.

THE General Aſſembly conſidering, that they had up the ſecond Day of *January* inſtant, cauſed call the Perſons, who had Appealed from, Proteſted again and Declined the Committee appointed for the *North*, by t late General Aſſembly, to have Compeared before the laſt da of this Aſſembly, to proſecute their ſaids Appeals and Proteſt tions, and Anſwer for their Declinatures, with Certification they compeared not, to proſecute the ſame before that tim their ſaids Appeals and Proteſtations ſhould be declared to fallen from, Void, and Null. And now finding that t ſaids Perſons have not Compeared before this Aſſembl for the Effect foreſaid. Therefore the General Aſſembl Do hereby Declare all the ſaids Appeals to be deſerted, falle from, void and null, to all intents and purpoſes, becauſe the have not been inſiſted in, before this Aſſembly.

XXVII.

Act and Sentence of Suſpenſion againſt Mr. John Hepburn.

Eadem Seſſione.

THE General Aſſembly of this National Church, Taki into their ſerious Conſideration the References made them concerning Mr. *John Hepburn* Miniſter, and having oft cauſ

uſed call the ſaid Mr. *John* to have compeared before this Aſſembly, conform to the citation given him thereanent, To Anſwer to theſe things wherewith he is charged, but he not compearing, The General Aſſembly upon the Twenty fifth day of *December* laſt Appointed a Committee of their own Number to conſider the whole proceſs led againſt him and make Report, which Committee did upon the Third day of *January* inſtant, bring in ſome Overtures thereanent, and the ſaid Report together with an Extract of the Proceſs and Depoſitions of Witneſſes led againſt him; As alſo his own Confeſſion being conſidered, The General Aſſembly found that ſeveral Articles were ſufficiently proven againſt him, and therefore were of the Judgement that though the ſaid Mr. *John Hepburn* deſerved the higheſt cenſure of the Church, yet to manifeſt all tenderneſs and willingneſs to Reclaim him, They did appoint that in caſe Mr. *John Hepburn* would oblige himſelf under his hand, to walk orderly in all time coming, and Embrace a Call when offered to him, and oblige himſelf to attend the Charge he ſhould be fixed to, and ſubmit himſelf to the Reſpective Judicatories of this Church, and forbear after this to Preach or Exerciſe any other part of his Miniſtry without the conſent of the ſaid Judicatories, in that caſe the Aſſembly declared they ſhould let all Proceſſes led againſt him fall, But in caſe he either appeared not before this Aſſembly or ſhould not oblige himſelf as aforeſaid, then the General Aſſembly appointed him to be Suſpended from the Office of the Miniſtry, with certification that he ſhould be Depoſed by the Synod of *Drumfrees*, if he ſhould be found to contraveen the ſaid Act of Suſpenſion, with which Sentence the ſaid Synod ſhall acquaint all other Presbytries within this National Church. Likeas in caſe the ſaid Mr. *John* ſhall be Depoſed, The General Aſſembly did apppoint that the whole Proceſs led againſt him ſhall be Printed: That all Men may ſee the Moderation and Juſtice of the ſeveral Judicatories that had occaſion to Proceſs him and in caſe that the Aſſembly ſhould Suſpend him, and he ſubmit thereunto, that it ſhould be free for the ſaid Synod or Presbytrie of *Dumfrees* to take off the ſaid Sentence upon his Application and deſire of the ſame, and embraceing the Terms above ſpecified, and upon the Day and Date hereof, The ſaid Mr. *John Hepburn* being again Thrice publickly Called at the moſt Patent Door of the Church, where the Aſſembly was Sitting, and not Compearing, The General Aſſembly being well, and ripely adviſed with the whole Premiſſes, did and hereby do actually Suſpend the ſaid Mr. *John Hepburn* from the Exerciſe of his Miniſtry, and appoints theſe Preſents to be Intimate by the Miniſter, who is to Preach in the New Church of *Edinburgh* the

next *Lords-Day*: As also that the Sentence be afterwards intimate in all the Paroch Churches within the Provincial Synods of *Glasgow*, *Air* and *Dumfrees*.

The next General Assembly of this National Church, is to be held at Edinburgh *upon the second day of* January, One Thousand Six hundred and Ninety seven Years.

The General Assemby being clos'd; The Members were dismiss'd with Prayer, Singing of the 85 *Psalm from the* 6 *Verse to the end, and pronouncing of the Blessing.*

Collected, and Extracted, From the Records of the General Assembly, By Me.

J. Bannatyne. *Cls. Syn. National.*

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FINIS.